

## WHAT IS CLAIMED IS:

- 1 1. A method for illustrating assigned relationships between graphic objects, said  
2 method comprising:  
3 displaying first and second graphic objects, said first graphic object  
4 having an assigned relationship with said second graphic object; and  
5 displaying a graphic directional indicator between said first and second  
6 graphic objects in response to a user input requesting said assigned relationship  
7 between said first and second graphic objects be shown.
- 1 2. The method of claim 1 wherein said graphic directional indicator includes an  
2 arrow.
- 1 3. The method of claim 2 wherein said graphic directional indicator includes an  
2 arrow of a particular color to indicate a type of relationship assigned between said  
3 first and second graphic object.
- 1 4. The method of claim 1 said displaying of said graphic directional indicator  
2 includes displaying said graphic directional indicator to point from said first graphic  
3 object to said second graphic object to indicate that said assigned relationship is from  
4 said first graphic object to said second graphic object.
- 1 5. The method of claim 1 further comprising:  
2 displaying a third graphic object, said third graphic object having a  
3 second assigned relationship with said second graphic object; and  
4 displaying a second graphic directional indicator between said second  
5 and third graphic objects in response to a user input requesting said second assigned  
6 relationship between said second and third graphic objects be shown.

1     6.     The method of claim 5 wherein said displaying of said second graphic  
2     directional indicator includes displaying said second graphic directional indicator to  
3     point from said second graphic object to said third graphic object to indicate that said  
4     assigned relationship is from said second graphic object to said third graphic object.

1     7.     The method of claim 5 wherein said displaying of said second graphic  
2     directional indicator includes displaying said second graphic directional indicator to  
3     point from said third graphic object to said second graphic object to indicate that said  
4     assigned relationship is from said third graphic object to said second graphic object.

1     8.     The method of claim 5 wherein said displaying of said first graphic directional  
2     indicator includes displaying said first graphic directional indicator to point from said  
3     first graphic object to said second graphic object in response to a user command for  
4     said second object, and wherein said displaying of said second graphic directional  
5     indicator includes displaying said second graphic directional indicator to point from  
6     said second graphic object to said third graphic object in response to said user  
7     command for said second object.

1     9.     The method of claim 1 wherein said displaying of said first graphic directional  
2     indicator includes displaying said first graphic directional indicator between said first  
3     and second graphic objects in response to a user command for one of said first and  
4     second graphic objects.

1     10.    The method of claim 1 wherein said assigned relationship between said first  
2     and second objects is a functional relationship between said first and second graphic  
3     objects.

- 1 11. A storage medium readable by a computer, tangibly embodying a program of  
2 instructions executable by said computer to perform method steps for illustrating  
3 assigned relationships between graphic objects, said method steps comprising:  
4 displaying first and second graphic objects, said first graphic object  
5 having an assigned relationship with said second graphic object; and  
6 displaying a graphic directional indicator between said first and second  
7 graphic objects in response to a user input requesting said assigned relationship  
8 between said first and second graphic objects be shown.
- 1 12. The storage medium of claim 11 wherein said graphic directional indicator  
2 includes an arrow.
- 1 13. The storage medium of claim 12 wherein said graphic directional indicator  
2 includes an arrow of a particular color to indicate a type of relationship assigned  
3 between said first and second graphic object.
- 1 14. The storage medium of claim 11 said displaying of said graphic directional  
2 indicator includes displaying said graphic directional indicator to point from said first  
3 graphic object to said second graphic object to indicate that said assigned relationship  
4 is from said first graphic object to said second graphic object.
- 1 15. The storage medium of claim 11 further comprising:  
2 displaying a third graphic object, said third graphic object having a  
3 second assigned relationship with said second graphic object; and  
4 displaying a second graphic directional indicator between said second  
5 and third graphic objects in response to a user input requesting said second assigned  
6 relationship between said second and third graphic objects be shown.

1 16. The storage medium of claim 15 wherein said displaying of said second  
2 graphic directional indicator includes displaying said second graphic directional  
3 indicator to point from said second graphic object to said third graphic object to  
4 indicate that said assigned relationship is from said second graphic object to said third  
5 graphic object.

1 17. The storage medium of claim 15 wherein said displaying of said second  
2 graphic directional indicator includes displaying said second graphic directional  
3 indicator to point from said third graphic object to said second graphic object to  
4 indicate that said assigned relationship is from said third graphic object to said second  
5 graphic object.

1 18. The storage medium of claim 15 wherein said displaying of said first graphic  
2 directional indicator includes displaying said first graphic directional indicator to  
3 point from said first graphic object to said second graphic object in response to a user  
4 command for said second object, and wherein said displaying of said second graphic  
5 directional indicator includes displaying said second graphic directional indicator to  
6 point from said second graphic object to said third graphic object in response to said  
7 user command for said second object.

1 19. The storage medium of claim 11 wherein said displaying of said first graphic  
2 directional indicator includes displaying said first graphic directional indicator  
3 between said first and second graphic objects in response to a user command for one  
4 of said first and second graphic objects.

1 20. The storage medium of claim 11 wherein said assigned relationship between  
2 said first and second objects is a functional relationship between said first and second  
3 graphic objects.